



VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 52nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BAGBENI ADETTO NZENGEYA (Zaire)

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GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 71, 72 AND 73 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON DRAFT RESOLUTIONS ON
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ITEMS

Mr. TANASIE (Romania) (interpretation from French): This year the consideration of the agenda items with which the Committee is now dealing gives us an opportunity to make an analysis in greater depth of the activities of the United Nations in an essential sphere, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security.

Any debate on international security is inevitably influenced by the present international situation, which is the foremost factor to be considered whenever we raise the question of how to act to make the system of peace and security effective so as to fulfil one of the fundamental functions of the world Organization, the promotion, maintenance and consolidation of peace, understanding and co-operation among nations.

With regard to the present situation in the world, it should be stressed that it is characterized by the persistence of serious and complex problems. Throughout the world, large-scale activities are under way designed to achieve disarmament and peace, but, at the same time, the arms race, and particularly the nuclear-arms race, is continuing. Similarly, the conflicts, crises and tensions that exist in various regions of the world have hardly decreased; on the contrary, they have worsened, thus creating new threats to the security of mankind. The policies of force, the threat of the use of force and brutal interference in the internal affairs of other States are incompatible with the principles and norms of international law and morality and are continuing.

The existence of vast stocks of nuclear arms throughout the world calls for a new way of thinking and analysing the problems of war and peace. We must begin by recognizing the objective fact that a world war is unthinkable, because it would

(Mr. Ionescu, Romania)

inevitably become a nuclear war that would lead to the destruction of all mankind and of life itself on our planet. This is why Romania, along with its President, Nicolae Ceausescu, considers that the fundamental problem of our era is that of halting the arms race and of engaging resolutely in disarmament, first of all nuclear disarmament, and the defence of the supreme right of peoples and individuals to peace and life and to live in freedom and dignity.

From the economic point of view the situation is still critical. The phenomena of crises continue to affect all peoples, and principally those of the developing countries who bear the burden of the economic crisis.

The analysis we are conducting this year with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security can only lead to the conclusion that the present international situation is far from reassuring. The draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Yugoslavia together with other countries, including Romania, on this subject contains an objective assessment of the international situation and calls for relevant steps in keeping with the spirit of the Declaration.

Although the picture seems gloomy, we note with satisfaction that encouraging signs have appeared recently on the political horizon, giving rise to a legitimate hope for a brighter future.

We are referring, first, to the progress made in the Soviet-United States negotiations and the conclusion this year of an agreement on the elimination of all medium- and shorter-range missiles, which will be signed at the summit meeting in December. The Romanian delegation also welcomes the agreement reached between the two parties to a 50 per cent reduction in strategic arms within the framework of the Geneva negotiations on nuclear and space weapons. The two parties have agreed to enter into complex negotiations to ban nuclear testing.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

There are also positive signs within the United Nations. In particular, we have in mind the results achieved this year with regard to other initiatives on the agenda of the General Assembly. For example, there is the adoption by consensus of the Declaration on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

The results of the session of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization have been characterized by the progress made in preparing a draft declaration on the prevention and elimination by the United Nations of disputes, situations that could lead to disagreement among nations or give rise to disputes, and matters that can threaten peace and security. Tangible progress has also been made in the Committee on the proposal regarding the use of a committee of good offices, mediation or conciliation within the United Nations framework. Lastly, real progress has been made in promoting an initiative regarding the development and strengthening of good-neighbourly relations among States, which is an indisputable requirement if a system of general security is to function in practice at a genuinely universal level.

I cannot conclude this short list of positive elements - which is doubtless incomplete and selective - without mentioning the efforts made in the United Nations and outside it to find solutions to existing armed conflicts, reduce tension and increase confidence. I have noted a stepping-up of contacts among Heads of State and Government and other political figures. We are also seeing a sharpened recognition of the need for the Security Council to discharge its responsibilities in a more effective manner in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security. The Secretary-General must be further encouraged in his initiatives within the framework of preventive diplomacy.

I have listed these elements both to round out the picture of today's world and to support the affirmation that today there are realistic conditions for tackling the problem of international security in a new way.

An approach along those lines is promoted by the initiative of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, including my country, regarding the building of a general system of international peace and security. Beyond the

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

various opinions regarding that initiative, the General Assembly's work this year illustrates the indisputable relevance of this topic: a better awareness of its contents and explicit recognition that this initiative is aimed at a subject of vital importance for the future of peoples and the world Organization itself.

Before expressing some views of my delegation on aspects of a general system of international peace and security, I should like to emphasize the importance of that initiative and its integration into the present activities of the world Organization.

The starting-point of this initiative, which requires intensive thought and dialogue, is the fact that nuclear weapons and the space weapons now emerging are radically changing the terms of any discussion about war and peace, security, economic and social development, and co-operation in all areas of international life. We find ourselves faced with a process whose scope is unprecedented in mankind's history. The universalization of the United Nations has been nearly completed. In 1945 the world Organization included only 51 Members and was, therefore, far from being universal; now its membership consists of 159 States, which highlights the enormous work done over four decades. Moreover, this quantitative universalization is accompanied by a development process shown by the qualitative universalization of our Organization. Its agenda continues to grow and become more diverse, covering nearly all matters of interest to the international community at the present time.

Despite its drawbacks - which are too well known to dwell on them in detail - the world Organization is demonstrating that States, in particular small and medium-sized ones, believe that the United Nations represents the sole forum capable of assuring a democratic solution to those major problems of concern to them. As the fundamental document and constitution of the world Organization, the

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

Charter of the United Nations provides the juridical and institutional framework for both the qualitative and the quantitative universalization of this unique forum. In the present situation, the question which arises concerns not whether the Charter should be amended or kept unchanged but, rather, the need to find new ways and means for making full use of the world institution's full potential.

The fundamental problem is unquestionably that of scrupulous respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. In this connection, we wish to stress once again the urgent need for passing from words to deeds, to specific actions, so that the noble and generous appeals of the United Nations to all Member States may find a real response in the actual behaviour of those States in international life.

It has been recognized that international security is an indicator of the state of relations among States in all areas of international life - disarmament, economic and social development, environmental protection, the humanitarian and human-rights sphere, strengthening the role of the United Nations and multilateral diplomacy in considering and finding a solution to the vital problems of today's world.

The multilateral framework is inseparable from efforts aimed at building a general system of international peace and security capable of harmonizing within and through the efforts of the world Organization the efforts and actions of all members of the international community to find a solution to problems of legitimate general interest.

The initiative for the building of a global system of international peace and security also finds its raison d'être in the fact that the present fragmentation of the system and the international security machinery sometimes gives rise to insuperable difficulties which drastically affect the exercise of the essential functions of the United Nations.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

There is no other way than that of multilateralism to resolve today's international problems. There we find an objective need which flows from the complexity of the stepped-up development of science and technology, the radical changes which have taken place in the life of national societies, the profound changes that characterize the world political arena, and the emergence of a great number of States resulting from implementation of the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination.

At the same time there is a need to implement the postulate of the equality of rights of all States - equality recognized in the series of fundamental legal instruments on which the United Nations system is based. Without respect for the legitimate interests, independence and sovereignty of all States there can be no genuine equality capable of ensuring international bilateral and multilateral co-operation of a diverse and multiform nature. But such equality is an essential premise for a general system of international peace and security. That is why we share the conviction that such a system demanded by the present situation unconditionally requires the de facto democratization of international relations, so that the process of finding a solution to essential problems may be based on democratic foundations. National and international democracy thus emerges as an essential element of the global nature of the approach to the problem of international security.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

How is it possible to speak of real democratization of the international Organization when a very small number of over-armed States are in a position to destroy mankind at any time while the majority of States, first and foremost the under-developed countries, lead a difficult existence, affected by ever growing frustrations? To extricate ourselves from this contradictory situation, we must adopt measures of interaction in the sphere of nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament and in the economic, social, ecological, humanitarian and human rights sectors. All this requires a complex approach, in view of the fact that the problems to be resolved are interdependent and are predicated upon solutions which can no longer be provided by outdated means and practices.

We must note that we are far from a simplistic approach, which would have argued for an unrealistic picture of today's world. Differences between States exist and will continue to do so. But what must be done away with are political and social anomalies, the economic distortions which go back to the oppression and exploitation of peoples over centuries. Any system of international security, and above all a future-oriented system, must be based on the fundamental principles of international law, in particular on respect for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of States, non-intervention and non-interference in internal affairs, non-recourse to the use of force or the threat of the use of force, peaceful settlement of disputes, equality of the rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, co-operation among States, and true respect for their commitments assumed under the United Nations Charter.

As regards the elements of the general system of international peace and security, we must admit that the political aspects and disarmament, first of all nuclear disarmament, have priority. The question may be asked why this is so. It

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

is because, in a nuclear age, weapons cannot guarantee the security of any State, even of those States that have such weapons.

The previous debates and the resolutions adopted reflect in a convincing way the fact that the complex problem of disarmament is the fundamental question of our time. My delegation has already had the opportunity to discuss this subject in detail in the course of the consideration of the group of agenda items on this problem. However, we should like once again to stress the need to intensify efforts to halt the arms race and to adopt and implement a set of specific measures for the reduction and complete elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction; to prevent the arms race in space; and to make noticeable reductions in armed forces, conventional arms and military expenditures. The achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control would be an important element in a global system of peace and international security.

If weapons, and in general military actions, are to be excluded from international life, then the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts should be a basic political element in a general system of security.

The burning, pressing nature of the peaceful settlement of disputes is a matter of major concern to the international community. Here a shared conclusion which emerged from the debate, both in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly and in different committees, including ours, is that in order to eliminate force from international relations everything possible must be done to strengthen the action and machinery of the United Nations to prevent, halt and put an end to conflicts and to find a solution to disputes among States through peaceful means.

Deeply concerned at the persistence of numerous conflicts that seriously threaten international peace and security, Romania proposed two years ago, and the

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General Assembly adopted by consensus, a solemn appeal to States in conflict to put an end to armed actions forthwith and to proceed to the settlement of their disputes by peaceful means, and a call to all States to comply with the obligation they had assumed to refrain from the threat or use of force and from any intervention in the internal affairs of other States. This solemn appeal, adopted during the fortieth anniversary of the Organization as resolution 40/9, reflects the will of peoples to respect the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to promote a policy of peace with strict respect for the fundamental principles of international law.

In the same spirit this year, in document A/42/562 of 23 September, Romania made the following proposal:

"Taking into account the serious dangers for the international community resulting from the intensification of existing conflicts, the United Nations should address a general appeal to all States parties to such conflicts to cease all military operations and to call all States of the world to proceed to a peaceful solution of their conflicts and disputes through negotiations. It should be also requested that during negotiations, starting from their very commencement, the military operations of any kind should be ceased."

(A/42/562, p. 3)

To be sure, at the political and legal levels efforts should be stepped up to make more effective use of the means for the pacific settlement of disputes as provided for by Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. Here my delegation would like to recall the proposal considered in various bodies of the Organization regarding recourse to a committee of good offices, mediation or conciliation within the framework of the United Nations. Such a committee could be set up for each specific case through an agreement by States parties to a dispute or with their

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consent, on the basis of a recommendation of the Security Council or the General Assembly or following consultations of States parties to a dispute with the Secretary-General. The States parties to a dispute could also agree to other ways and means of setting up this Committee.

Still within the framework of the political element of a system of global security it would be useful to mention the need for the development and strengthening of good-neighbourly relations among States. Indeed, the possibilities for mutually advantageous co-operation in numerous spheres and in various forms are particularly favourable among neighbouring countries, and the development of such co-operation can have a positive influence on all international relations.

Given the complexity of the international situation, the general system of security for the future must give greater relevance to economic problems. Here all measures to be considered could take as a starting-point the fact that, given the present state of the world economy, which is marked by the persistence of certain crisis phenomena both in the economic area and in the monetary and financial sphere, the economic situation of the developing countries has deteriorated noticeably and the gap separating these countries from the developed countries on the economic, technical and scientific levels continues to grow. Commercial and financial relations and economic co-operation in general are in a disturbing state. The international commercial system has been seriously jeopardized as its principles and role are frequently ignored or avoided and protectionist and discriminatory measures which hinder international trade, in particular exports of manufactured products coming from the developed countries, have been stepped up.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

We believe that equal economic security must be assured through a restructuring of international economic relations, including the financial and monetary aspects, on a democratic basis of equality of rights in the interests of all States, including the developing countries, the establishment of a new international economic order, the elimination of underdevelopment and a global and just settlement of the problem of the foreign debt. The reallocation of resources, following real disarmament, for the needs of economic and social development, would greatly contribute to achieving those objectives.

There can be no doubt that the most serious problem facing the developing countries is the burden of the foreign debt. Romania has made proposals to resolve the problem in the appropriate forums, proposals which are now being studied. Concerning the humanitarian aspect of a general system of international security, stress must be placed on a solution to the fondest hopes of men and peoples regarding fundamental human rights - the right to life, the right to work, to education and culture, social equality, the equitable distribution of the riches of society, participation in guiding public life - the full flowering of the human personality.

On the other hand, we must never forget that the solution to all problems affecting human rights and fundamental freedoms must be carried out within the national framework of each State and represents an essential attribute of its sovereignty. Given the disturbing realities of today's world as it affects human rights, great attention must be given to resolving questions of unemployment and hunger, illiteracy and housing.

Within the context of international co-operation, action should also be taken to eliminate all forms of discrimination, manifestations of racism, fascism, nationalism, chauvinism, anti-semitism and other ideas and practices which lower human dignity.

(Mr. Tanasie, Romania)

My delegation would like to express the hope that the analysis of agenda items on international security will result in a better understanding of the validity and relevance of the initiative regarding the building of a general system of international peace and security. That initiative, in fact, provides us with an integrated picture of the essential elements of the process of building such a system. In the document which I have already quoted, we read that:

"We must start from reality of the present world ... from the fact that between the problems of economic underdevelopment, political problems and those of disarmament, there are an interdependence and a reciprocal conditioning. Only the complex solution, in a new, democratic manner of these problems will open the path towards a world of justice and social equity, towards a more just and better world ...". (A/42/562, p. 5)

We are convinced that consideration of the present agenda items will once again highlight the raison d'être for such an analysis and approach. I should like to assure all delegations of the co-operation of my delegation so that consideration of this group of agenda items concludes with better results than has been the case in the past, in keeping with the will of all peoples to live in a world of peace and security.

Mr. HDRN (Hungary) (interpretation from Russian): Mankind has arrived at a stage in its history when its survival and the preservation of civilization demand that we should identify without delay those national, regional and global problems whose solution requires joint action.

The United Nations, on the basis of its Charter, has laid the foundations of a system of collective security on which it has thus far been possible, and will continue to be possible in the future, to build a reliable comprehensive system designed to promote mutually beneficial relations, measures to prevent conflicts

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

and increase confidence, and peaceful co-operation. Although this process of construction has been going on for over 40 years, dangers to security have nevertheless arisen in precisely those areas in which the situation has long been ripe for joint action.

It is beyond doubt that the Charter of the United Nations and its institutional system have stood the test of time and could serve as a reliable foundation for solving the problems of the future as well. However, these foundations and opportunities must be used in accordance with the needs of the present day. In order to eliminate dangers, there must be purposeful and joint action for scrupulous observance of the purposes and principles of the Charter. We must achieve a common security whose logic in the long term will lead to comprehensive collective security.

The concept of such security proposed by 10 socialist States Members of the United Nations could contribute to the creation of a global machinery for restraining confrontation and thereby averting a worsening of the international climate such as took place in the second half of the 1970s and especially at the beginning of the 1980s. The fact is that among the existing means for solving conflicts, an increasing role is being played by those means based on the use and the threat of force. In this respect the activities of the United Nations system during the past four decades have not produced much result. The United Nations must be given tasks aimed at reversing the trend towards the use of force and creating rational methods for the resolution of conflicts. Those methods must be based on the present-day realities of the world, especially the existence of weapons of mass destruction, as well as on those political, economic, social, cultural and other differences which make the States Members of the United Nations

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

so diverse. The use of force and other coercive measures can be allowed only in strict conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

Various countries and peoples have followed different historic paths, they have started from different platforms to approach the common interests and ideals created within the United Nations system, and today they still stand at different distances from them. These differences are a natural phenomenon, like the differences in their cultural characteristics. Efforts to understand their nature can help to create a higher level of confidence. Mutual understanding of cultural characteristics offers good possibilities for a more profound knowledge of others and for tolerance towards differences.

The concept of comprehensive international security includes specific tasks arising from the present situation, from the interdependence of States and also from the strengthening of existing foundations designed to stabilize international peace and security. These foundations are specified in the Charter of the United Nations. It is essential that the machinery functioning in this spirit should be dynamically renewed.

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

Today, conditions and resources for ensuring international security are found to an increasing extent in international co-operation. That is also true of security in general, which in addition to military security includes the political, economic and environmental spheres, as well as the sphere of human rights and humanitarian issues.

In the political area, we must build new institutionalized foundations and frameworks that can prevent a return to the conditions of the cold war.

To avert a world war, we need resolute action and a genuine political breakthrough. In order to make progress, the theoretical and practical problems that arise must be solved through efficient and democratically organized co-operation among the countries affected and concerned. The United Nations is the world's most suitable international organization for mobilizing all of mankind's accumulated knowledge, technical skill and political experience with a view to harmonizing different interests.

Information plays an important role in strengthening trust and dispelling prejudice. It would be useful to establish a United Nations information agency, whose activities would provide guidance in the field of international information.

Expansion of the practice of democratic openness in such areas of security policy as military security, which has thus far been either closed or highly manipulated, is supported by a growing number of States Members of the world Organization as a requirement for resolving conflicts. It is becoming possible and increasingly necessary to co-operate in such areas as the harmonization of military doctrines, with a view to making sure that they are based on defensive principles. Along with measures for verification, security and confidence-building, military openness has been gaining importance in summing up practical experience with reference to security policies not only in the military but also in the economic, financial, environmental, humanitarian and human-rights fields.

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

An example of the effective activities of the world Organization may be found in United Nations successes in eliminating colonialism, especially during the 1960s and 1970s, and in certain programmes of the United Nations Environment Programme. The same can be said about the efforts of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to avert the threat posed by the heavy burden of international indebtedness, which threatens outright economic collapse. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and other organizations and programmes inside and outside the United Nations also have played and should continue to play a role that promotes the strengthening of the positive elements of co-operation.

For a clearer definition and understanding of the purposes of military comprehensive security, we must compare the principles and practice of the security and military policy of States and military alliances, formulate a clearer definition of their character, and make recommendations. In order to transform the structures of armed forces and armaments into a structure of a defensive nature, it is also necessary to clarify the concept and the categories of offensive and defensive weapons. In this connection, the United Nations could set up a register of programmes relating to the armaments of various States, primarily States which have significant military potential, and could record changes in this field.

It is essential to set up an international verification machinery which, in addition to comprehensive monitoring of the observance of disarmament agreements, would provide continuous monitoring of the conversion of military structures and doctrines to defensive ones. With a view to promoting the creation of a defensive structure, a ban on any form of sale of offensive weapons must, as a first step, be incorporated into the trade in armaments.

In order to ensure real progress in the field of disarmament, there must be a radical reduction in armed forces and conventional weapons. Furthermore, armed

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

forces and conventional weapons must be balanced at a lower level and be converted to defensive ones.

In the process of neutralizing hotbeds of tension or declaring such areas to be zones free from external interference, the first step would be to freeze the present military and political position of the great Powers, and the second step would be their withdrawal from certain crisis areas. It would also be important to apply in those regions the Helsinki principles on confidence-building, including advance notification of troop movements and the invitation of observers. It would also be desirable to prohibit or to monitor any military activity in areas of conflict.

The establishment of a United Nations satellite system to observe conflict situations could provide objective day-to-day information on the movements of the military forces of foreign countries, with a view to restraining them.

Co-operation between the States Members of the United Nations in combating international terrorism would not only contribute to the elimination of terrorism but also strengthen mutual confidence between States and help to improve the international climate. Therefore there must be an organized form of the struggle against international terrorism, the principal organ for which could be a permanent or ad hoc commission functioning within the framework of the United Nations. Participation in the work of the commission could be open to all States Members of the United Nations desiring to take an active part in the struggle against international terrorism.

The concept of comprehensive economic security, which encompasses co-operation in the fields of international economics, trade, finance, science and technology, as well as environmental protection, arises from the universal nature of the world economy. Proceeding from the interdependence of nations, it has an influence on all participants in the international division of labour.

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

As a result of the global internationalization of economic processes, any autarkic or selfishly nationalistic approach to the problems of international economic development is an anachronism in today's world. Consequently the solution of the problems of the world economy requires joint action and the formulation and implementation of conditions for international economic security. Basic among these would be the predictability of world economic processes and the maintenance of co-ordination between economic policy decisions taken at the national and international levels.

An important requirement is the establishment of substantial contacts between regional economic groups, as well as giving due attention to the fundamental interests of States not members of those groups. Accordingly, the gradual elimination of political and economic discrimination, restrictions and protectionism must be made a universal requirement.

With regard to questions of economic security, we have already made a number of proposals in the general debate in the Second Committee. I should like to add that in the case of countries which have foreign debts and have a single-crop trade structure, the payment of credits must be tied to movements in the prices of their dominant export goods on the world market. Furthermore, it must be made possible in general to capitalize the medium-term payment of interests (for example, over 3 to 5 years) for those countries which are prepared to institute viable development programmes for capitalized interest payments and new credits associated with them. It would also be useful to agree on an upper limit below which a general system of preferences would be guaranteed for countries without any time-limits.

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

The United Nations should be given the task of forecasting trends and new phenomena in world economic development on a comprehensive day-to-day basis. The United Nations should also take the initiative in organizing the flow of economic information and in convening consultations between leading economic figures and interregional and international conferences at the highest level. It should participate in making available to all countries the latest achievements of scientific and technical research and in co-ordinating research on the most important subjects. It should promote the expansion of the membership of specialized financial institutions.

The States Members of the United Nations must be encouraged to furnish each other with technology on environmental protection and public health and must, at the same time, begin to unify standards and norms. An information system relating to the environment could make it possible to work out a joint strategy for preventing or giving warning of the threat of natural, climatic, agricultural or dangerous-substance disasters, as well as for eliminating their consequences. Consideration should be given to establishing regional and interregional centres on the environment.

One possible project is the establishment, within the framework of the United Nations, of an environmental satellite system to make ecological information available to all the countries of the world. An integral part of such a system would be a bank of ecological data and an international ecological agency. It would be useful to publish an ecological map of the world each year.

It would be desirable to investigate the joint development of environmental technology, as well as the classification of existing technical methods and technologies in such areas as atomic-power-station safety and the storage, processing and destruction of toxic substances and dangerous by-products of nuclear power stations and chemical factories.

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the promotion of their realization and the development of international co-operation in this field constitute a decisive factor for strengthening mutual confidence between States and international security.

In our view, safeguarding human rights is not solely an internal matter for individual States. The violation of internationally recognized norms and the blatant infringement of human rights have a negative influence on relations between countries and on the international political climate and threaten international security.

Extensive joint efforts must be made to ensure the observance everywhere of civil and political rights, and also of economic, social and cultural rights. In order to attain this, all States must accede to the International Covenants on Human Rights, comply with their letter and their spirit and contribute to the planning and establishment of a more effective system for the international verification of the observance of treaty obligations. In this connection, the internal legislation and the system of administrative regulation of each State must be made consistent with State obligations arising out of international treaties. The internal life of States must also be extensively democratized, giving due regard to their different characteristics and historical traditions.

An important factor in strengthening confidence between States and peoples is ensuring the free and unrestricted movement of people, ideas and information. This will help to strengthen mutual confidence and tolerance between peoples and nations and to eliminate any form of discrimination, as well as xenophobia, nationalism, chauvinism and other anti-humanitarian ideas and conditions.

(Mr. Horn, Hungary)

In the process of making human rights a reality, a leading role is played by the expansion of international co-operation in the spheres of interpersonal contacts, culture, art, education and public health. Progress must be made in eliminating obstacles to the flow of scientific and technical information. It will also be necessary to develop institutional frameworks for bilateral and multilateral co-operation in all of these fields, including the development of direct relations between the relevant organizations.

We consider it important to work out a unified system of regulation under international law in the spheres of reuniting families, marriage, contacts between people and organizations and the verification of an easier visa system, with a view to making substantial progress in all of these spheres.

A consideration of how the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations have been realized, how its provisions have been complied with and in what spheres we must adapt the present international security machinery of the world Organization to the needs and challenges of our time could serve as a first step on the way to establishing comprehensive international security. On the basis of this, we welcome the statement by the States members of the European Communities that they regard effective compliance with obligations under the Charter as a fundamental goal and that they declare their readiness to co-operate to attain those ends. In our view, at the beginning of our consideration we should concentrate on those questions on which general agreement among the Member States is attainable.

Mr. MAHBUBANI (Singapore): As this is the first time I am addressing the Committee, please allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your fine stewardship of this Committee, a stewardship which has earned wide praise. Today, the Committee is discussing several agenda items, but I shall restrict my comments to the proposal for a comprehensive system of international peace and security.

(Mr. Mahubani, Singapore)

Like some other delegates who have spoken before me I have had some problems understanding the meaning and intent of this proposal. To express my confusion simply, let me say that I am not sure whether the proposal attempts to pour old wine into a new bottle or whether it attempts to pour new wine into an old bottle. We even fear that this may be an attempt to mix some old wine with new wine, which could have adverse effects on the good old wine.

The good old wine I am referring to are the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. These principles have not served us perfectly, but they have served us well. The Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Petrovsky, whom I shall be quoting a great deal in my remarks today, said in this Committee on 19 November 1987 that

"the Soviet Union proceeds from the premise that the United Nations Charter is a model for ensuring the security of the international community in keeping with the national interests of all States" (A/C.1/42/PV.49, p. 28)

He added:

"It is important to ensure greater effectiveness on the part of the United Nations in all its activities. If the United Nations is to become a real centre of co-ordinated actions for maintaining international peace and security, all States must act on the basis of non-confrontational approaches oriented towards a search for realistic and generally acceptable solutions to international problems and towards full use of the potential for co-operation contained in the Charter." (pp. 29-30)

We agree with these statements, and in particular with the last phrase I quoted, namely that all States should make "full use of the potential for co-operation contained in the Charter." My first question therefore is: if we are to make full use of the potential contained in the Charter, why do we need to introduce a new proposal for comprehensive peace and security?

(Mr. Mahbubani, Singapore)

To be fair, Mr. Petrovsky did attempt to answer this question in his speech. In his response to these questions, he made many other comments with which we also agree.

For example, he stated that it is necessary to:

"develop a 'reflex of multilateralism' based on the unconditional recognition of the primacy of international law". (A/C.1/42/PV.49, p. 32)

But this too is taken from the good old wine we already have.

The Soviet Union also suggests that the United Nations Charter is the child of a pre-nuclear and a pre-space age. As Mr. Petrovsky said:

"the United Nations Charter was not calculated at all to take account of the existence of nuclear weapons". (A/C.1/42/PV.49, p. 32)

Here again, we agree with the premise that the advent of new technology can have its social and political effects. However, while we understand the threat of nuclear weapons, we do not see how their existence invalidates the principles of the United Nations Charter. The increased capacity of some States to interfere in or to dominate other States does not in any way undermine the fundamental Charter principle of non-interference in the affairs of other States.

It is not our intention today to be harsh in our analysis of this new proposal. We are genuinely confused. When the proposal reiterates the principles of the United Nations Charter, we agree with it. But when the proposal takes this good old wine and tries to mix it with new wine or new elements, especially elements we do not understand, we have to stop and caution that most wine experts counsel against diluting or adulterating good old wine.

We are also aware that this proposal has been put forward in the context of a new international climate. As the representative of the United Kingdom said:

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"... we are alive to the wide-ranging varieties of proposals that have been made by Soviet leaders recently for the management of international affairs and for strengthening the role of the United Nations. We recognize that in many ways Mr. Gorbachev has conceived a vision of a better world. We welcome this, though much of it is not new. We share many of the same aspirations."

(A/C.1/PV.51, p. 12)

My delegation would also like to support proposals for the strengthening of the role of the United Nations because we are aware that the Soviet Union could have chosen a different path in its efforts to carve out new international policies. Instead of, say, encouraging a "reflex of multilateralism", it could have chosen to deal directly with the other major Powers on all major international disputes, bypassing the United Nations and making it perhaps even more irrelevant. This is still a real possibility. If the forthcoming summit meeting between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev goes off well, and kicks off a number of wide-ranging bilateral arms control and other agreements between these two leaders, this might - and let me stress, I say "might" and not "will" - increase the incentive for both super-Powers to settle global problems outside the framework of the United Nations. This could be tragic for the Organization.

As a small State, Singapore firmly believes that it is in the interests of all small States to encourage the super-Powers to work within the framework of the United Nations. We should therefore create incentives rather than disincentives for them to stay in the United Nations. I say this quite honestly because my delegation was troubled by what happened in the Third Committee on Friday, 20 November 1987. Each time we humiliate a super-Power in the United Nations, we may be jeopardizing the future of this Organization. This does not mean that we should compromise on the principles enshrined in the Charter, whenever they are

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violated in, say, the Middle East, Central America, southern Africa, Kampuchea or Afghanistan, to suggest only five critical areas. When those five issues are discussed in plenary meeting, we should ruthlessly call for the application of the principles of the United Nations Charter to these areas, and our commitment to those principles should not waver even if we have to confront a super-Power on the issue. However, it is questionable whether we need to raise these five issues again in all other committees when other subjects are being discussed.

If these five issues are constantly raised to embarrass one or other of the super-Powers, both super-Powers may well decide that this forum can only work against their interests. They could easily take away their marbles and play among themselves in some other forum, making the United Nations less relevant. Both will then have even fewer incentives to respect the decisions of this Organization. Paradoxically, therefore, each time we humiliate a super-Power with any of these five issues, we are damaging rather than enhancing the ability of the United Nations to solve these five problems.

We could, for example, easily embarrass the Soviet Union in this proposal by insisting that any resolution on the comprehensive system of peace and security should refer specifically to United Nations resolutions on Afghanistan. We would have a valid reason for doing so because it is manifestly inconsistent for any State to announce its commitment to the United Nations Charter while at the same time ignoring the decisions of the General Assembly based on the Charter. We could choose to expose this inconsistency but my delegation, for one, would advise against doing so because we want to encourage rather than discourage the Soviet Union in its efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations in international affairs.

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Indeed, if every other major Power were to follow the Soviet Union in announcing its firm commitment to pay what it is withholding from the United Nations regular and peace-keeping budgets, we would have a much healthier institution today than the present tottering body, which cannot even guarantee its staff that their pay cheques will be available in three to four weeks' time. The financial crisis the United Nations has been suffering is only a symptom of a larger disillusionment that has set in with the Organization. If a super-Power decides to swim against this tide by working to strengthen the United Nations, we do not see how it would be in our interests to discourage it.

In conclusion, let me stress that my delegation will study seriously and sympathetically all proposals put forward for the strengthening of the United Nations. Our commitment to the Charter is absolute. Proposals that serve to strengthen the good old wine in the Charter will receive our support. In the case of the proposal for comprehensive peace and security, however, as we fear that the good old wine may be diluted or adulterated by new elements we do not yet understand, my delegation will be unable to support the draft resolution on this proposal, in document A/C.1/42/L.89, this year. We shall have to wait until we fully understand the meaning and intent of the proposal.

This proposal may also merit further study, but we fear that it would not be appropriate to have a committee of experts study such topics. Technical issues can be studied by expert bodies but as we are discussing fundamental political principles here, principles that have a bearing on the life of each and every Member State, we feel that each and every Member State should be allowed to participate fully in the evolution of this proposal. As Mr. Petrovsky said:

"No one has ready-made solutions. No one holds in his hands the thread that can help us find a way out of the labyrinth of the contradictory contemporary

(Mr. Mahbubani, Singapore)

world. We are in the process of searching and we invite others to join us in seeking ways of building security." (A/C.1/42/PV.49, p.27)

We should like to suggest that this invitation should be thrown open to all Member States and not just to a group of experts.

Mr. AKRAM (Pakistan): It is a pleasure to see you presiding over the Committee's proceedings, Sir.

Never before has the security of States been so vulnerable and the survival of mankind been so threatened as they are today. Sparked by chauvinism and imperialist ambitions, or by fear and suspicion, conventional conflicts rage in various parts of the world, inflicting death and misery on hundreds of thousands of people each year. In the nuclear theatre, 50,000 warheads are poised for the instant obliteration of military targets as well as the great metropolitan centres of the world. While major nations are spending unprecedented amounts to equip themselves with ever more lethal weapons, hunger and destitution stalk entire continents. The ever increasing despair and frustration of deprived peoples could explode into violence of unprecedented dimensions at any time.

Yet today there is also a glimmer of hope. The leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union have jointly proclaimed that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. They have agreed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in outer space and to eliminate them on Earth. An unprecedented agreement between them to eliminate an entire class of weapons appears imminent. The members of the Eastern and Western blocs have professed their readiness to abandon confrontation and to pursue the path of co-operation. The smaller nations of the world have demonstrated their ability to act in accordance with the dictates of their own conscience and legitimate interests. Great Power behaviour has undergone a change in an interdependent world, in which pursuit of ambitions by military means has proved counter-productive. The realization has grown that only political solutions can resolve conflicts in various parts of the world. There is also a growing realization that the United Nations is an indispensable instrument for the preservation of international peace and security.

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

These developments could herald a new era of genuine international dialogue and co-operation between States. It is because of them that our discussion here on international security has assumed special importance.

In the context of these developments, the proposal of the socialist countries for a new system of comprehensive peace and security is of considerable interest, especially since it purports to reflect the new political thinking of one of the super-Powers and its new leadership. As my delegation said in the Committee last year, this initiative deserves careful and close consideration. However, the main objective and eventual shape of this proposal are not yet clear. My delegation remains concerned that a premature declaration of a new concept of comprehensive security may deflect the attention of the international community from the universally accepted norms and principles clearly enunciated in the Charter to a competing concept which is not in focus.

We are therefore heartened by the statement of Mr. Gorbachev, in his article of 17 September 1987, that

"comprehensive security will become operative to the extent that the United Nations, its Security Council and other international institutions and mechanisms function effectively." (A/42/574, p. 10)

We have also noted the remarks of Deputy Foreign Minister Petrovsky that the Soviet Union regards

"a comprehensive system of international security as a kind of interim programme for reasserting the role of the United Nations and its Charter as the primary instruments for peace." (A/C.1/42/PV.49, pp. 44-45)

In our thinking, the existing provisions of the Charter provide a satisfactory basis for strengthening and reasserting the role of the United Nations. The world community must fully utilize the potential of the existing system before it

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proceeds to design a new system. The history of the past 40 years clearly indicates that threats to international peace and security have arisen not owing to any inherent weakness or flaw in the Charter, but because of the repeated violations of its principles and purposes. Ironically, the most flagrant violations of the Charter's provisions can be laid at the doors of States which themselves have a special responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The world has changed considerably since the adoption of the Charter. The emergence of newly independent and sovereign States from the process of decolonization promoted by the United Nations has increased the Organization's membership by more than three times. The basic assumption underlying the Charter's provisions that the major allies of the Second World War would continue to act in concert has proved illusory, since they were soon divided into opposing military blocs. New lines of demarcation have been created or existing divisions accentuated, separating rich and poor nations, small and powerful countries, and above all, nuclear and non-nuclear States. Indeed, at the birth of the Charter, the vital dimension which nuclear weapons have assumed in the structure of international security was not envisaged.

Obviously, Member States require a new breadth of vision to respond to the complexities of the modern era. Pakistan is therefore prepared to enter into a dialogue on possible new approaches to enhance and strengthen international peace and security.

We have closely examined the views and proposals contained in General Secretary Gorbachev's article of 17 September 1987. We acknowledge the inherent importance of the proposals advanced by the Soviet leadership and can welcome a number of them, particularly those which seek to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations.

(Mr. Akram, Pakistan)

There are, of course, other ideas and issues that require consideration in any endeavour to strengthen international peace and security. For instance, we should consider the steps by which the world can move away from the present reliance of the great Powers on nuclear deterrence and return to the concept of collective security envisaged in the Charter. Complete nuclear disarmament and substantial reduction of the conventional armaments of militarily significant States would seem to be essential for this purpose. Special attention is needed to enhance the security of smaller and weaker nations, which often fall prey to the expansionist or hegemonic ambitions of major Powers or larger neighbours. To circumvent the Charter's injunctions, aggression now is often said to be by invitation.

We must also foresee that persistence of extremes of affluence and poverty among and within nations will sooner or later lead to widespread strife and conflict. A genuine and universal effort is required to give substance to the Charter's promise of better standards of life in larger freedom for all people. Not only the human rights postures, but also the economic policies of Member States should be considered as a legitimate object for international scrutiny.

At the last session, when the item on comprehensive security was placed on our agenda, the Pakistan delegation was able to support the resolution proposed by the socialist countries after it had been modified to take into account the views of others including my delegation. We hope that a similar course of action will be pursued this year.

My delegation feels that the resolution to be adopted on this item should be formulated in clear language, not in phraseology which reflects only the analyses and approach of the sponsors. The action to be taken on this subject should not be restricted to the study of a concept the objectives and contours of which are as yet not entirely clear. The General Assembly may find it productive to embark on a

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more comprehensive exercise, that is, to examine ways and means to reinforce the effectiveness of the Charter through supplementary measures and norms, including the idea of comprehensive security. We also share some of the fears voiced here about entrusting such a study to a group of independent experts. Perhaps it might be preferable to envisage the possibility of having a more representative forum undertake a meaningful dialogue on ways and means to strengthen international peace and security in the present era.

In this connection, we have noted the remarks made by the representative of Hungary at the end of his statement.

In our endeavour to promote peace and security, illusion cannot be a substitute for vision; ideas should not be an obstacle to action; promises must not replace concrete deeds.

We, in Pakistan, and indeed the entire world, have been most encouraged by the scintillating initiatives of General Secretary Gorbachev. As my Prime Minister has said, we fervently share his noble vision of a peaceful and prosperous world. We anxiously await the concrete translation of Mr. Gorbachev's vision into the outer actions and policies of the Soviet Union.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): We had two more speakers on our list for this meeting. They will not speak at this time.

This afternoon at 3 p.m. we shall continue our work and hear statements from the following delegations: Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Democratic Kampuchea, Madagascar and Poland.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.